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Letter from Taizé

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The afternoon of the day he died, August 16th, Brother Roger called one of the brothers and said to him, "Note down these words carefully!" There was a long silence while he attempted to formulate his thinking. Then he began, "To the extent that our community creates possibilities in the human family to widen…" And he stopped there, too exhausted to finish his phrase.

These words reflect the passion that inspired him, even in his old age. What did he mean by "widen"? He probably wanted to say: do everything possible to make more perceptible for everyone the love God has for every human being without exception, and for all peoples. He wanted our little community to bring this mystery to light, through its life, in a humble commitment with others. So we brothers wish to take up this challenge, together with all those who are searching for peace across the earth.

In the weeks before his death, he had begun to reflect on the letter that would be made public during the Milan meeting. He had noted some themes and some texts of his that he wished to take up again and work on. We have taken them just as they were in order to compile this "Unfinished Letter", translated into 57 languages. It is a kind of final message from Brother Roger, which will help us to go forward along the road on which God "widens our steps" (Psalm 18:36).

Reflecting on this unfinished letter in the meetings held in 2006 both in Taizé, week by week, and elsewhere on different continents, each person can try to find ways of completing it by the life he or she lives.

Brother Alois

For 2006

Unfinished Letter

"I leave you peace; I give you my peace."[1] What is this peace that God gives?

It is first of all an inner peace, a peace of the heart. This peace enables us to look at the world with hope, even though it is often torn apart by violence and conflicts.

This peace from God also supports us so that we can contribute, quite humbly, to building peace in those places where it is jeopardized.

World peace is so urgent in order to alleviate suffering, and in particular so that the children of today and tomorrow do not live in distress and insecurity.

In his Gospel, in a dazzling intuition, Saint John expresses who God is in three words: "God is love."[2] If we can grasp only those three words, we shall go far, very far.

What captivates us in those words? The fact that they transmit this luminous conviction: God did not send Christ to earth to condemn anyone, but for every human being to know that he or she is loved and to be able to find a road to communion with God.

But why are some people gripped by the wonder of a love and know that they are loved, or even cherished? Why do others have the impression that they are neglected?

If only everyone could realize that God remains alongside us even in the fathomless depths of our loneliness. God says to each person, "You are precious in my sight, I treasure you and I love you."[3] Yes, all God can do is give his love; that sums up the whole of the Gospel.

What God asks of us and offers us is simply to receive his infinite mercy.

That God loves us is a reality sometimes hard to comprehend. But when we discover that his love is forgiveness above all else, our hearts find peace and are even transformed.

And then, in God, we become able to forget what assails our hearts: this is a wellspring from which we can draw freshness and new vitality.

Are we sufficiently aware that God trusts us so much that he has a call for each one of us? What is that call? God invites us to love as he loves. And there is no deeper love than to go to the point of giving oneself, for God and for others.

Whoever lives a life rooted in God chooses to love. And a heart resolved to love can radiate goodness without limits.[4]

Life is filled with serene beauty for whoever strives to love with trust.

All who choose to love and to say it with their life are led to ask themselves one of the most compelling questions of all: how can we ease the pain and the torment of others, whether they are close at hand or far away?

But what does it mean to love? Could it be to share the suffering of the most ill-treated? Yes, that's it.

Could it mean having infinite kind-heartedness and forgetting oneself for others, selflessly? Yes, certainly.

And again: what does it mean to love? Loving means forgiving, living as people who are reconciled.[5] And reconciliation always brings a springtime to the soul.

In the small mountain village where I was born, near our home, a large poverty-stricken family lived. The mother had died. One of the children, slightly younger than I, often came to see us. He loved my mother as if she were his own. One day, he learned that they were going to leave the village > 3

Pope Benedict XVI

Dear young people, at a time when you are living a beautiful ecclesial experience of encountering others, sponsored by the Taizé Community, Pope Benedict XVI joins you all in prayer.

In expressing tribute to Brother Roger who desired these international meetings in order to root in young Christians a spirit of brotherhood and peace lived out concretely, the Pope's wish is that the dialogue among yourselves, who have come from different countries and different Christian denominations, as well as the meeting with the Christians of Milan who are welcoming you, will enable you to form new ties that will be seeds of peace among people. May the example of the founder of Taizé and the tireless testimony of Pope John Paul II in favor of dialogue and peace encourage you to be peacemakers in your turn! In a world made fragile by many situations of tension, and in our developed societies marked by new forms of violence that affect the young in particular, the Pope invites you to witness with simplicity and joy to the Spirit of peace who dwells within you, as a result of the gift that the Lord Jesus made of himself, once and for all, on the Cross, for the love of all. For, as the apostle Paul says, "he is our peace" (Eph 2:14) and invites us to forgive, the sign of an absolute love.

Entrusting you to the prayer of Mary, Mother of the Lord and of all those who have become his brothers and sisters, the Holy Father grants you with all his heart an affectionate apostolic blessing, as well as to the Taizé brothers, to the communities and the families who are welcoming you.

Patriarch Bartholomeos of Constantinople

During these days when we are living more deeply the mystery of God the Word made man who, overflowing with love, emptied himself and took on the condition of a slave "to make us, human beings, gods by grace", we salute with great enthusiasm the 28th young adult European meeting in Milan, that your beloved Taizé Community has prepared with care and energy.

May this message be considered as a humble memorial for the tireless Brother Roger of blessed memory, founder of the community, who entered into fullness in the manner of the martyrs, and who is in addition the inspirer of the present meeting.

The gathering of young European Christians from different denominations is a great hope for the whole of our old continent, which is abandoning its Christian roots and giving itself over to materialism.

As Christians we must change our way of thinking to that of Christ and thus be transformed, each in his or her own way, into living gospels, proclaiming the authentic gospel truth by our responsible style of life and by the offering of ourselves. Then we will become bearers of the peace of God that is beyond all understanding, the love learnt from Christ and the comfort offered by the Most Holy Spirit.

We rejoice as a father and with all our heart with all of you; we wish a rich and beautiful success for your meeting in the historic city of Milan, that city which gave the Church the inestimable gift of such a great cloud of saints and witnesses to the faith. And we bless you all by these words: may the grace, the peace, the love and the consolation of our Triune God be with you for your entire lifetime.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan

Dear friends of Taizé and young people from the entire world, it is a pleasure for me to send you, in my own name and in the name of the United Nations Organization, my warmest greetings on the occasion of this twenty-eighth young adult European meeting organized by the Taizé Community.

This new stage in the "pilgrimage of trust on earth" is an opportunity to celebrate the faith that unites you and to reflect on your involvement in society. Know that, whatever country you may come from, big or small, rich or poor, you all have a role to play in the combat for a world that is more just and more peaceful.

In fact justice, like peace, begins among ourselves, at the heart of our societies, in our own countries where more and more often citizens of the most diverse backgrounds, traditions and convictions live side by side.

It is not hard to be against war. It is much harder to resist, in daily life, the prejudices, the simplifications and the different mixtures that stir up hatred, deepen tensions and threaten the stability of our societies and even peace among nations. What is hard is always to look for lines of meeting rather than for breaking-points. What is hard is to open oneself to others, to make an effort to understand their point of view and to accept that they are different.

We live in a world that is more and more interdependent and interracial. Respect for the equal dignity of all cultures and all civilizations is thus an essential condition for the harmony of our societies and for world peace.

Brother Roger, whose memory I salute here, became the tireless advocate of these noble values of respect, tolerance and solidarity. Throughout his life he served peace, dialogue and reconciliation. As you continue together the work that he began, I express the wish that the spirit of Taizé may continue to inspire your actions even after this meeting.

Patriarch Alexis II of Moscow

Dear brothers and sisters, I greet with all my heart the organizers and the participants in the young adult European meeting, together this year in the land of Italy.

It is significant that the theme of the meeting includes such Christian notions as peace, love and consolation. These virtues are so important when anonymity, hatred and violence seem to have become common.

The sadness of the recent tragic loss of Brother Roger is still alive in our hearts. He did so much that there might be more good and love in the world, and he was a victim of evil and madness.

Recently we have been witnesses to outbursts of violence in countries considered affluent and prosperous. This leads us to reflect on the fact that, in the contemporary world, no one can feel fully secure. Even material possessions and armed force, on which "this world" counts so much, cannot protect human beings.

For us Christians, it is clear that the main reason for the absence of outward peace is found within people. If the soul is not in peace, this will inevitably be shown outwardly, above all in the absence of love for others. And yet peace and love are gifts from God. He alone, the original Source of these goods, can grant them to human beings.

It is so important to understand that it is the Heavenly Father who can give his children the comfort and the reassurance which they desire so much. Lord Jesus Christ calls: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).

I invite you to hold firmly to the choice made once and for all to follow Christ, despite all the difficulties and the temptations of our time. It is only by loving the Lord with all your heart that you can acquire the magnificent gift of love of neighbor. And that will be the best testimony, able to lead many others to Christ, the only source of peace, love and consolation.

BIBLE MEDITATIONS

March: Numbers 11:24-30

In the course their long journey in the wilderness, Moses and the people of Israel passed through many different stages and crises. Chapter 11 of the book of Numbers recounts one of the most important of these. Having to deal with the complaints of the people, which are becoming more and more strident, Moses realizes that his responsibilities have become too heavy for him. So he gathers together a group of seventy respected men to help him. He asks God to support them in their task by giving them the Spirit. But two of the men chosen do not come, although Moses is unaware of this. Nonetheless, the Spirit of God comes down upon them all, even on the two who remained apart.

Worried about this division and the new difficulties it could cause, Joshua, Moses' faithful assistant, rushes up to him and expresses his concern. But Moses does not share Joshua's reservations. "Are you jealous because of me?" he asks him. Moses is not worried about himself; he continues to trust in the presence of God and invites Joshua to do the same. Moses also says, "If only all the Lord's people would receive the Spirit from the Lord and become prophets!"

In the experience of the women and men of the Old Testament, the presence of God's Spirit was given for a time, usually for one particular purpose. The Spirit came from God and then went back to him. In the steps of Christ, the first Christians affirmed that the Spirit was now given to all believers, and that this presence remained forever (John 14:15-17). In the light of this story from the book of Numbers, it can be said that, animated by the Holy Spirit, we are called to encourage one another mutually in order to grow (see Ephesians 4:7-13), to go forward all together, even in the midst of crises, towards the future that God opens up.

- When tensions appear in situations where we have a responsibility, what helps us to keep on trusting and not to be worried about ourselves? How does the example of Moses inspire and challenge us?
- Going forward all together, even in the midst of crises: what does that mean for me, for us today?

April: John 12: 20-28

We can discover in this scene described by Saint John an account of a temptation Jesus experienced in Jerusalem. His life is seriously threatened (see John 11:53) and then all of a sudden people come from a different world than that of Israel, and these Greeks are interested in him. Who knows? Perhaps they will listen to his message in a more sympathetic and far-reaching way. Perhaps something more universal can begin. All Jesus would have to do would be to turn away from what seems doomed to failure and to refuse what is in danger of leading to death.

Jesus acts as if he doesn't understand. He does not establish any contact with these Greeks. For in order to reveal to people who God is, he has to go beyond dialogue and teaching. What God's love is, what can draw all people (v. 32), will only become transparent in the gift of himself, when in death he joins the lowest of all, those furthest away. A grain of wheat can only bear fruit if it falls into the earth and dies.

This road from below will reveal who God is; it will "glorify his name" (v. 28), making God's deepest identity shine out. But at the same time, Jesus too will be glorified (v. 23). His resurrection and his recognition by people will thus not be a revenge after being humiliated, but this end will make his true nature shine out, that of a man whose existence is not founded on his own being, rights, or reputation, but on God.

What John describes here recalls the combat of Gethsemane. There, too, Jesus was deeply troubled (v. 27). There, too, his prayer had to cross a threshold: at first dominated by a situation that seemed impossible to pass through ("save me"), it was subsequently filled by God to such an extent that Jesus prayed for him ("glorify your name").

This road of Jesus prefigures our own. Clinging at all costs to our own life will cause us to lose it. Clinging to Jesus more than to ourselves will open a road to eternity. Serving him will not simply be an opportunity to learn something from him; it can only be achieved if we share his fate completely (v. 26).

- If Jesus committed himself so deeply for us, what is our reaction? Interest? Admiration? Or does it go further?
- How does the little parable of the wheat grain (v. 24) apply to my existence? Am I ready to ask God: "Give me the gift of giving myself"?

These Bible meditations are meant as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer in the midst of our daily life. During the course of a day, take an hour or so to read the Bible passage with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, a group of 3 to 10 people can meet to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams

At this year's gathering it will be impossible not to be aware of Brother Roger's tragic death.

Very few people in a generation manage to change the whole climate of a religious culture; but Brother Roger did just this. He changed the terms of reference for ecumenism by the challenge to Christians of diverse loyalties to live the monastic life together. He changed the image of Christianity itself for countless young people. He changed the churches' perception of the absolute priority of reconciliation, first in post-war Europe, then throughout the globe.

His presence and prayers are now more real and powerful than ever. May his memory be a living companion for all of you as you meet to renew your vision of Jesus.

Letter from Taizé

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Holy Spirit, comforting Spirit, receive our simple prayer. We want to entrust everything to you, and to rejoice in what you accomplish in our soul.

MARCH

DAILY READINGS

1 Wed Mt 6:1-6,16-18
ASH WEDNESDAY Jesus said: When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who is there in secret.

2 Thu 2 S 22:1-20
God is my rock and my stronghold, he is worthy of praise. I call on him and I am saved.

3 Fri 2 Co 7:1-7
Paul writes: We were beset by conflicts without and by fears within; but God, who encourages the downcast, consoled us.

4 Sat Col 3:8-11
You have put on a new self that is being renewed in the image of its Creator. Here there is no room for distinction between persons; there is only Christ, who is all and in all.

5 SUN Mk 1:12-15
After being tempted in the desert, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God. "The time has come," he said, "the kingdom of God is at hand. Turn to God and believe in the good news of the Gospel."

6 Mon Ex 13:17-22
In the desert, the Lord went ahead of his people, by day in a pillar of cloud to show them the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light. Thus they could walk by day and by night.

7 Tue Heb 10:1-18
The Lord says: I will put my laws in their hearts and I will write them on their minds. Their sins and wrongdoings I will remember no more.

8 Wed 2 P 3:14-18
Make every effort to be found at peace. Understand that the great patience of God is for your salvation.

9 Thu 1 Jn 5:1-4
Loving God means keeping his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.

10 Fri Ezk 18:21-32
The Lord says: I take no pleasure in the death of anyone. Turn to me and live!

11 Sat Heb 12:12-24
Seek peace with all people. Be careful that no root of bitterness begins to grow.

12 SUN Mk 9:2-10
Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his disciples. And a cloud covered them with its shadow, and from the cloud a voice came, saying, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."

13 Mon Heb 3:7-14
Encourage each other every day, so that none of you become hardened by the deceit of sin. For we shall come to share in Christ if we hold firmly to the trust we had at first.

14 Tue Dt 8:14-18
Moses said to the people: Do not forget the Lord your God who delivered you from the land of slavery, who guided you through this vast desert, and who in a waterless place gave you water out of hard rock.

15 Wed Col 4:2-6
Persevere in prayer, being watchful and thankful.

16 Thu Heb 6:13-20
God has given us great encouragement to grasp the hope that is held out to us. It is an anchor for our souls.

17 Fri Mt 9:1-8
Jesus said to the scribes, "So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then he said to the paralytic, "Stand up, take your bed and go home." And the man got up and went home.

18 Sat Heb 8:6-13
The Lord says: Among my people, no one will need to teach their neighbour, saying, "Know the Lord!", for they shall all know me, from the smallest among them to the greatest.

19 SUN 1 Co 1:22-25
We proclaim Christ crucified, which to the nations is foolishness, but to those whom God has called it is Christ, the strength and the wisdom of God.

20 Mon Mt 1:18-24
An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

21 Tue Rm 10:5-10
The Word of God is very near you, it is on your lips and in your heart.

22 Wed Jn 1:19-28
John the Baptist said, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert: Make straight the way of the Lord!"

23 Thu Mk 10:46-52
Jesus asked a blind man, "What do you want me to do for you?" "Rabbi, I want to see", he replied. And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has saved you."

24 Fri Lk 4:1-13
Jesus answered the tempter saying, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

25 Sat Lk 1:26-38
The angel said to Mary: Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

26 SUN Jn 3:14-21
God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through him. No one who believes in him will be judged.

27 Mon Lk 16:10-16
Jesus said: "Up to the time of John the Baptist, it was the Law and the Prophets; from then onwards the kingdom of God has been preached and everyone is forcing their way into it."

28 Tue Ep 4:7-16
If we live in love and in truth, then in all things we shall grow into Christ, who is the head. By him, the whole body grows and builds itself up in love.

29 Wed Ps 65
Our faults overwhelm us, Lord, but you blot them out.

30 Thu 1 P 4:7-11
Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ.

31 Fri Jn 8:31-36
Jesus said: Everyone who commits sin is a slave. Now a slave has no permanent place in the household, but a son belongs to it for ever. So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free.

These short readings are those read, day by day, at community prayer in Taizé. The Bible reference given indicates a slightly longer passage.

Christ Jesus, give us a resolute heart that, in a simple prayer, tirelessly strives to discover a communion with God.

Lm 3:54-57
1 Sat You came near when I called you, Lord, and you said, "Do not be afraid."

Jn 12:20-33
2 SUN Jesus said: Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant will also be.

1 Co 15:12-28
3 Mon Paul writes: Christ has been raised from the dead. For just as all die in Adam, so in Christ all will be brought to life.

Lk 5:27-32
4 Tue Jesus noticed a tax collector called Matthew sitting at the tax office and he said to him, "Follow me." And, leaving everything, Matthew got up and followed him.

Col 3:1-4
5 Wed From now on, your life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ — who is your life — is revealed, you also will appear with him in glory.

Jn 16:20-22
6 Thu Before his passion, Jesus said to his disciples: Now you are sad, but I shall see you again and you hearts will be full of joy. And that joy no one shall take from you.

2 Co 4:5-18
7 Fri Paul writes: We are in difficulties on all sides, but never crushed; perplexed, but not in despair.

Jn 17:1-11
8 Sat Jesus prayed: Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you and give eternal life to all those you have given him.

Mk 11:1-10
9 SUN PALM SUNDAY Jesus entered Jerusalem, and those who walked in front and those who followed shouted: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the Kingdom that is coming!

Lk 22:39-46
10 Mon When they reached the Mount of Olives, Jesus said to his disciples: Pray, so as not to fall into temptation.

Ws 1:11-15
11 Tue God did not make death and takes no pleasure in the destruction of the living. God created all things for life.

Mt 10:38-39
12 Wed Jesus said: Anyone who gives their life for my sake will find it.

Jn 12:20-30
13 Thu Jesus said: In truth, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains only a single grain. But if it dies, it yields a big harvest.

Jn 19:23-37
14 Fri GOOD FRIDAY Scripture says of Christ: They will look on the one they have pierced.

Ph 2:1-11
15 Sat Taking the nature of a servant, Christ became as human beings are. And he humbled himself still further, remaining faithful to the point of death, and death on a cross. Therefore God has exalted him, and has given him the name that is above all other names.

Mt 28:1-8
16 SUN EASTER DAY The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid: I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen as he said he would."

Ep 4:1-13
17 Mon Christ descended to the depths of the earth, and he who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

2 Co 4:16—5:10
18 Tue We do not fix our eyes on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Col 2:6-15
19 Wed You were dead because of your sins, but God has raised you up with Christ. He has forgiven us all our sins.

1 P 1:3-9
20 Thu In his great mercy, God has given us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Rv 1:9-18
21 Fri John writes: One like a son of man, Christ, put his hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last, the Living One. I was dead and now I am alive for all time."

Jn 7:1-24
22 Sat Jesus said: My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. If anyone is prepared to do God's will they will discover whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

Jn 20:24-29
23 SUN Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus replied, "You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Jn 13:1-15
24 Mon Jesus said to his disciples: If I, who am Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

Mk 16:15-20
25 Tue St MARK Jesus sent out his disciples, saying: Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation.

Rv 22:1-9
26 Wed The servants of God will see him face to face and his name will be written on their foreheads. It will never be night again, and they will not need the light of a lamp or of the sun, because the Lord God will be shining upon them.

2 P 1:1-8
27 Thu God's promises have been given us so that we may share God's own nature.

Rv 1:1-8
28 Fri Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the First-born from among the dead. He loves us and has washed away our sins.

Jn 21:15-19
29 Sat A third time, Jesus said to Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter was hurt that he asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" and said, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you."

Lk 24:35-48
30 SUN The Risen Christ stood among his disciples and said: Peace be with you!

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DAILY READINGS

APRIL

and, for him, leaving was not easy at all. How can a child of five or six be consoled? It was as if he did not have the perspective needed in order to make sense of such a separation.

Shortly before his death, Christ assured his friends that they would receive a consolation: he would send them the Holy Spirit who would be a support and a comfort for them, and who would always remain with them.[6]

In the heart of each person, Christ still whispers today, "I will never leave you all alone; I will send you the Holy Spirit. Even if you are in the depths of despair, I remain alongside you."

Welcoming the comfort that the Holy Spirit gives means seeking, in silence and peace, to surrender ourselves to him. Then, though at times dire events may occur, it becomes possible to go beyond them.

Are we so easily upset that we need to be comforted?

There are times when all of us are shaken by a personal trial or by the suffering of others. This can go so far as to undermine our faith and extinguish our hope. Rediscovering the trusting of faith and peace of heart sometimes involves being patient with ourselves.

One kind of suffering leaves a particularly deep impression: the death of someone we love, someone we may have needed in order to keep going forward here on earth. But such a trial can sometimes be transfigured, and then it opens us up to a communion.

A Gospel joy can be restored to someone in extreme distress. God comes to shed light on the mystery of human suffering, going so far as to welcome us into an intimacy with himself.

And then we find ourselves on a path of hope. God does not leave us all alone. He enables us to advance towards a communion, that communion of love which is the Church, at one and the same time so mysterious and so indispensable …

The Christ of communion[7] offers us this enormous gift of consolation.

To the extent that the Church is able to bring healing to our hearts by communicating forgiveness and compassion, it makes a fullness of communion with Christ more accessible.

When the Church is intent on loving and understanding the mystery of every human being, when tirelessly it listens, comforts and heals, it becomes what it is at its most luminous: the crystal-clear reflection of a communion.

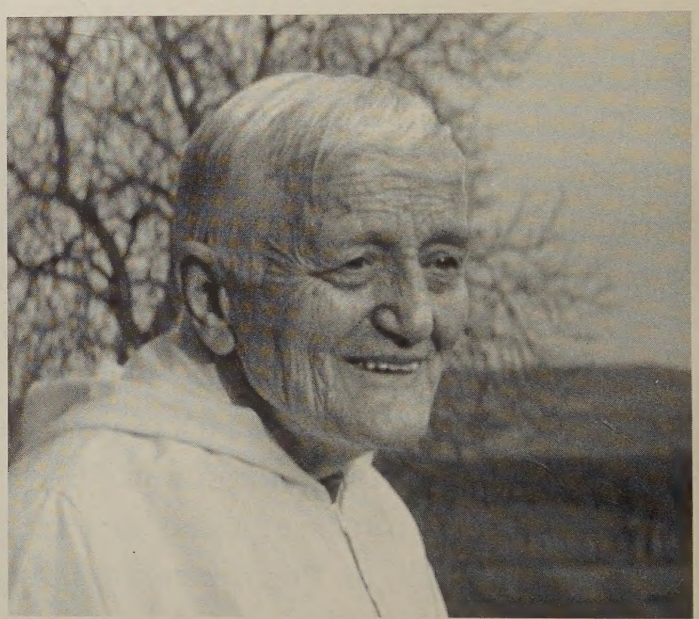
Seeking reconciliation and peace involves a struggle within oneself. It does not mean taking the line of least resistance. Nothing lasting is created when things are too easy. The spirit of communion is not gullible. It causes the heart to become more encompassing; it is profound kindness; it does not listen to suspicions.

To be bearers of communion, will each of us walk forward in our lives on the road of trust and of a constantly renewed kind-heartedness?

On this road there will be failures at times. Then we need to remember that the source of peace and communion is in God. Instead of becoming discouraged, we shall call down his Holy Spirit upon our weaknesses.

And, our whole life long, the Holy Spirit will enable us to set out again and again, going from one beginning to another towards a future of peace.[8]

To the extent that our community creates possibilities in the human family to widen…



1. John 14:27. **2.** 1 John 4:8. **3.** Isaiah 43:4

4. At the opening of the Council of Youth in 1974, Brother Roger said, "Without love, what is the good of living? Why live any longer? For what purpose? That is the meaning of our life: to be loved for ever, loved into eternity, so that in our turn we go to the point of dying for love. Yes, happy those who die for love." Dying for love meant for him loving to the very end.

5. "Living as people who are reconciled." In his book *A Prospect of Happiness?* which appeared two weeks before his death, Brother Roger explained once again what these words meant for him: "Can I recall here that my maternal grandmother discovered intuitively a sort of key to the ecumenical vocation, and that she opened for me a way which I then tried to put into practice? After the First World War, her deepest desire was that no one should ever have to go through what she had gone through. Since Christians had been waging war against each other in Europe, she thought, let them at least be reconciled, in order to prevent another war. She came from an old Protestant family but, living out an inner reconciliation, she began to go to the Catholic church, without at the same time making any break with her own people. Impressed by the testimony of her life, when I was still very young I found my own Christian identity in her steps by reconciling within myself the faith of my origins with the mystery of the Catholic faith, without breaking fellowship with anyone."

6. John 14:18 and 16:7

7. The "Christ of communion." Brother Roger already used this expression when he welcomed Pope John Paul II to Taizé on October 5th, 1986: "The constant longing of my brothers and myself is for every young person to discover Christ, not Christ taken in isolation but the 'Christ of communion' present in fullness in that mystery of communion which is his Body, the Church. There, many young people can find ways to commit their entire lives to the very end. There they have all they need to become creators of trust and reconciliation, not just among themselves but with all the generations, from the most elderly to little children. In our Taizé Community, following the 'Christ of communion' is like a fire that burns us. We would go to the ends of the earth to look for ways, to ask, to appeal, to beg if need be, but never from without, always while remaining within that unique communion which is the Church."

8. These last four paragraphs were spoken by Brother Roger in December 2004 at the end of the European meeting in Lisbon. They are the last words he said in public.